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FARMERS MEET TO OUTLINE COURSE FOR AGRICULTURE.

Mr. C. V. Hemphill, State Director of the Production and Marketing Administration, has announced that County ACA Committeemen and Secretaries from New Mexico's 31 counties will meet at the State office of the PAMA at State College, New Mexico, on January 17, 18 and 19.

This is expected to be a busy meeting," Mr. Hemphill says, "at which those Committeemen, elected by farmers and ranchers of their respective county will tackle the problems confronting agriculture for 1946."

FARM PRICES AVERAGING 18% OVER PARITY LEVELS

The Department of Agriculture reports that the actual prices received by farmers for things they sell are averaging 18 percent above their parity price levels. Farm income runs even higher since total crop production last year was the third largest in history.

The parity index used to figure parity prices for farm products has climbed to its highest peak in the last 25 years. This index, which represents the prices, interest, and taxes paid out by farmers, has reached 176 of the 1910-14 base period. This is an increase of 5 points from a year ago.

INDUSTRIAL FEEDING BOOSTS FARM MARKETS

A potential annual food market of a billion dollars or more is developing in the United States through better feeding of workers "on the job."

Industrial feeding offers a concentrated as well as a broader market for farm products. Around 2,000 of the largest factories in the country, each employing over 1,000 workers, feed a total of 5 million workers daily. So the plan is well adapted to assist in disposal of seasonal farm surpluses. This program replaces the traditional but inadequate lunch box or sandwiches with an

adequate cooked meal. So it promotes better health which in turn means greater industrial production.

Altogether, about 9 million workers now eat at least one meal a day in employee cafeterias. When the number reaches 12 million, the Department of Agriculture estimates that the billion-dollar market for farm products will be realized. This goal should be reached soon at the present rate of expansion of industrial feeding. Before the war, some 2 million employees were fed in plants that served mid-day or mid-shift meals. During the war, in the interest of production, health, and morale, and less absenteeism, the Government encouraged in-plant feeding, with emphasis on better diets for workers. With the war over and the demand for record-breaking industrial production lessened, the USDA is emphasizing industrial feeding as "an additional market for farm products."

OPA SAYS NO RISE IN WHEAT CEILINGS

Ceiling prices on wheat will not be increased at this time, OPA says. The announcement is made to correct rumors of higher ceilings, which have been widely circulated in the trade. For the past several months, wheat has been selling at or near ceilings in most markets. Present ceilings reflect parity to growers, as required by the Emergency Price Control Act.

OUR BUTTER SHORTAGE IS EASILY EXPLAINED

Greatly increased consumption of fluid milk, cream and specialty dairy products is one reason why city housewives are not finding more butter in storekeepers' refrigerators.

Most of the consumption increase is in coffee cream, whipping cream, ice cream, and fluid milk itself. Fluid cream dealers and industrial users of butter fat have been paying higher prices for cream than can be obtained from manufacture of butter under present price regulations. While farm production of milk in 1945 gained about 4.5 billion pounds over 1944, manufacture of butter dropped

nearly 115 million pounds during the same period, Butter production in 1944 was close to 30 percent under prewar production. From a pre-war average of around 31 billion pounds annually, milk consumed as milk or cream in cities and towns had jumped to more than 44 billion pounds by 1944. Milk going into ice cream has increased 30 to 40 percent during recent months, compared with the like period of 1944. Production of dry ice-cream mix, largely for military use, doubled last year.

FOOD DEMAND TO STAY HIGH

The demand for most farm products is likely to stay close to the present high level, at least until 1946 crops become available in Europe and Asia, the USDA reports. Domestic demand, which was partly unsatisfied during 1945 because of rationing and price controls, is expected to continue very large in spite of a prospective small decline in consumer income. Exports are likely to be maintained at or above their wartime level during the next few months, provided means for financing are made available. Reconversion to a peacetime economy has been proceeding rapidly and with less unemployment than had been commonly anticipated.

BEEF PRODUCERS PUT ON NOTICE

Producers have been notified that there will be no downward revision before June 30, 1946, in the over-riding ceiling prices or in the maximum price ranges for different grades of beef cattle.

Pointing out that authorization for continuing ceiling prices or the payment of subsidies will expire on June 30 unless continued by Congress, the Stabilization Administrator stresses that no definite commitment can be made about ceilings or subsidies after that date. If controls are extended beyond June 30, suggestions on a program will be made to Congress, followed by announcement of the program by the proper agency. To assure cattle feeders as much protection as possible against price changes and to encourage the movement of cattle into feed lots, the industry had been promised at least 6 months' advance

notice of any downward revisions in the ceiling price and subsidy program. The price program has been in operation since May 1945.

FOOD SMALL FACTOR IN SURPLUS PROPERTY

Food and agricultural products accounted for about \$60 million, or less than one-half of one percent of the \$13 billion worth of Government-owned property declared surplus in the U.S. by the end of 1945.

USDA disposal agency for food located in the U.S. anticipates no difficulty in disposing of the balance of surplus food as promptly as it can be graded and inspected. Only nominal amounts are expected to be declared surplus in the future. Principal owning agencies of surplus food have been War and Navy Departments and the War Shipping Administration. The largest single item of surplus food on hand now is frozen emulsified whole eggs (whites and yokes) of the type used by bakers, inventoried at nearly \$23 million. All food declared surplus in foreign countries has been used for relief and rehabilitation.

OPA PLANS CEILINGS FOR 1946 COTTON CROP

As a step toward stabilizing the cotton market, OPA is preparing an advance notice that ceilings will be imposed on prices for the 1946 cotton crop. Recent advances in raw cotton prices appear to be speculative in nature, due to traders who are betting on inflation, according to Chester Bowles, Price Administrator. Since textiles and clothing are important in the cost of living, OPA will do everything in its power to avoid raising prices of these commodities.

FARM NEWS SHORTS

Retail OPA ceiling prices for top grade eggs were reduced two cents a dozen December 27, and another two cents per dozen January 3. The reductions will continue at a weekly rate of one cent or more for the next several weeks. The total decrease in retail ceiling prices of the best eggs, from the period of December 26 through March this year, will amount to about 20 cents a dozen.